

Message Text

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S E C R E T ATHENS 7977

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT GR

SUBJ: GREEK ELECTIONS: MARGINAL COMMENTS BY RALLIS

REF ATHENS 7950

1. FOR GREEK ELECTION PUNDITS IN THE DEPARTMENT AND OTHER AGENCIES, THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS OF GEORGE RALLIS ON THE CURRENT ELECTION CAMPAIGN MAY BE OF INTEREST. THESE COMMENTS ARE SUPPLEMENTARY TO THE MORE GENERAL VIEWS OF RALLIS REPORTED IN REFTEL.

2. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION BY DCM, RALLIS SAID THAT HE BELIEVED CONSTANTINE MITSOTAKIS, THE APOSTATE LEADER WHO IS RUNNING AS AN INDEPENDENT CANDIDATE FROM CHANIA, CRETE, WOULD HAVE A HARD TIME BEING ELECTED. RALLIS HAD HEARD FRIENDS OF MITSOTAKIS ESTIMATE THAT HE WOULD RECEIVE AS MANY AS 10,000 VOTES IN CHANIA. RALLIS WAS EXTREMELY SKEPTICAL ABOUT THIS, RECALLING MITSOTAKIS HAD ONLY BEEN A MODERATELY STRONG CANDIDATE BEFORE 1967 WHEN HE HAD THE FULL SUPPORT OF CENTER UNION HEADQUARTERS AND WAS THE FAVORITE SON OF ELEFThERIA. RALLIS OBSERVED THAT THE NEW DEMOCRACY SLATE IN CHANIA WAS EXTREMELY WEAK. HE THOUGHT CARAMANLIS WOULD BE LUCKY TO ELECT ANYONE FROM THAT DISTRICT. THIS MIGHT HELP MITSOTAKIS INDIRECTLY, BUT RALLIS NEVERTHE-

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LESS CONCLUDED THAT HIS CHANCES OF SUCCESS WERE PROBLEMATIC.

AMONG THE OTHER APOSTATES, RALLIS WAS SURE THAT PAPASPYROU WOULD BE ELECTED, THAT BAKATSELOS WOULD MAKE A GOOD RUNNING IN THESSALONIKI, AND THAT KOTHRIS MIGHT BE ELECTED IN AGHIOS NICOLAOS.

3. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION ABOUT THE PROBABLE SUCCESS OF RESISTANCE CANDIDATES LIKE PANAGOULIS AND MINIS, RALLIS SAID THAT RESISTANCE HEROS DID NOT NECESSARILY MAKE GOOD CANDIDATES. IN THE ATHENS AREA THERE WERE 28 SEATS TO BE FILLED. THIS MEANT THAT EACH VOTER HAD 28 NAMES ON HIS BALLOT FROM WHICH HE COULD ONLY CHOOSE TWO CANDIDATES. BY THE TIME THE VOTER GOT INTO THE VOTING BOOTH, HE WOULD HAVE NARROWED HIS CHOICE TO THREE OR FOUR CANDIDATES. IN ALL PROBABILITY, THESE WOULD BE CANDIDATES KNOWN TO HIM PERSONALLY OR WHOSE NAMES HE HAD HEARD DURING THE CAMPAIGN. THUS, UNLESS RESISTANCE CANDIDATES HAD EFFECTIVELY ORGANIZED THEIR CAMAPAGNS AND ESTABLISHED THEMSELVES AS CANDIDATES IN THE MINDS OF THE VOTERS BEFORE ELECTION DAY, THEIR CHANCES OF SUCCESS WERE MINIMAL. FURTHERMORE, FAME IN ONE FIELD COULD NOT AUTOMATICALLY BE TRANSFERRED INTO ANOTHER. "UNLESS THE VOTERS KNOW YOU ARE RUNNING," RALLIS SAID, "IT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE HOW WELL KNOWN YOU ARE OUTSIDE OF POLITICS."

4. IN THIS CONNECTION RALLIS COMMENTED THAT MAVROS HAD MADE A MISTAKE IN INSISTING ON ONLY TWO PREFERENCE CROSSES IN THE ATHENS AREA. THE CENTER UNION DID NOT HAVE SUFFICIENTLY EFFECTIVE MACHINERY TO ASSURE THE ELECTION OF ANY BUT ITS LEADING CANDIDATES. AS A RESULT, ALL OF THE OTHER CENTER UNION CANDIDATES WERE SCRAMBLING FOR VOTES AND FIGHTING EACH OTHER AS MUCH AS THEY WERE FIGHTING THE OTHER PARTIES.

5. SPEAKING OF HIS OWN CANDIDACY, RALLIS SAID THAT HE HAD BENEFITED FROM THE EXTENSIVE PUBLICITY HE HAD RECEIVED AS MINISTER TO THE PRIME MINISTER. IT HAD NOT BEEN NECESSARY FOR HIM TO CREATE A PERSONAL ORGANIZATION OR TO DO MUCH CAMPAIGNING. HE THOUGHT HIS CAMPAIGN EXPENSES WOULD AMOUNT TO NO MORE THAN 300,000 DRACHMAS. HE INTENDED TO BE OUT OF ATHENS UNTIL THE WEEK BEFORE THE ELECTIONS AND OCCUPIED WITH

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PARTY BUSINESS DURING MUCH OF THE FINAL WEEK. HE WAS REASONABLY CONFIDENT THAT HE WOULD RUN FIRST IN ATHENS AND DID NOT NEED TO MAKE A SPECIAL EFFORT TO ASSURE THIS OUTCOME. KUBISCH

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